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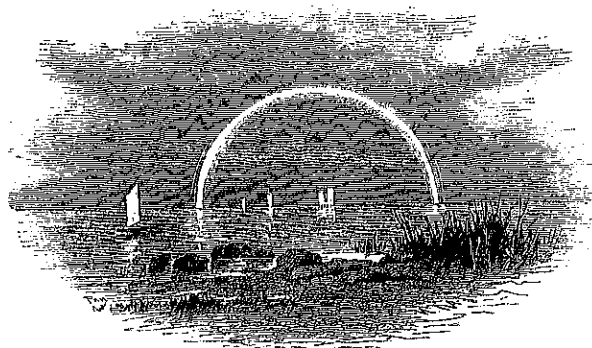
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FOR MONEY—FOR LOVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "THE BRIDGE BETWEEN," "THEIR SUMMER DAY," &C. &C.



IT was just like a fairy story come to life, and I will tell you all about it, fairy-story fashion, and then you can judge for yourselves. Once upon a time, but not long ago, there were two sisters living with their grandmama and their maiden aunt down at Chislehurst. The one was called Mary, and the other was called Etta, and they were both very pretty

and so on. Mary was quiet and sympathetic, and always did all she could to help every one, and was rather put upon in consequence, but didn't know it, and would not have minded if she had. Etta was very lively and thoughtless, and had a way of getting other people to do all manner of things which she ought to have done herself; and she used to long for fine dresses and pretty trinkets, and all the poms and vanities of this wicked world. And the young men who went to the house to talk to the grandmother, and from admiration of the maiden aunt, used to like Etta better than Mary, for they thought there was more "go" in her, and never realised that there was also much less heart. And among the young men who went, there was one who had been in the habit of going from his youth up. His name was Wilfred Martin, but for some unknown reason, and probably because his name was not William, he was always called Will. He was a very nice young man and very handsome, but unfortunately he had only one hundred and twenty pounds a year, which was the magnificent salary paid to him by the firm of engineers that employed him as a clerk. Now of course he was head and ears in love with Etta, and always had been; and she really liked him pretty well, though she snubbed him sometimes; and he was quite determined to marry no one else, and one day he took her for a walk and told her so; and she, being in rather a sentimental humour, let him talk.

"We don't want to be rich," the foolish young man said; "it doesn't mean happiness, you know, dear Etta;" and she said, "No;" but she thought, "It does mean fine clothes, and I should look remarkably well in them;" and then he went on: "You know you two girls are so clever; I was thinking how nice Mary looked yesterday; and I thought how pretty you would look making up a simple cotton for your own self to wear;" and she said, "Yes," and thought, "Catch me at it if I can help it; I should like to wear beautiful silk and have a fashionable dressmaker to make it;" and then Will went on and on, and told her how he loved her, and how he'd do anything in the world for her if she'd marry him; and she, reflecting that there wasn't any one else in the way, and that it was rather

nice to have a good-looking young man by your side protesting that life wouldn't be worth having without you, turned down her eyes, and whispered that she thought she could some day, perhaps, be happy with him, and that she didn't like any one else in the world better, or even as well.

Then they went home; and when Mary was told the news she got very pale, and said she hoped they'd be very happy. Then she went up to her room and shut the door, and cried fit to break her heart; and then she hoped that Etta would give up all her flirting ways and be good, and unselfish, and kind, and all that, for Will was the dearest fellow in the world, and deserved to marry a model of goodness.

But Etta was rather an artful little minx, and refused to let Will say a word to her grandmother or her maiden aunt about what had passed between them, and so Will had to get all the sympathy he could out of Mary, who never denied it him, but would sit for hours talking about her sister.

"Mary is the kindest girl," Will used to think, "and when we are married she shall come and stay a month." And he went without his dinner for nearly a fortnight, and only had bread and cheese, and with the money saved he bought a silver locket for Etta and a three-cornered pin-cushion for Mary.

One morning a letter in a blue envelope and directed in an ugly handwriting came for Etta, and she opened it, and when she had read it she gave a scream; and Mary said, "What is the matter?" and the maiden aunt told her she ought to be ashamed of herself; but Etta didn't take the least notice of them, only walked out of the room and went up-stairs and reflected for some time. Then she went into her grandmother's room and found her sitting up in bed, in a night-cap with very large frills, having her breakfast, and she exclaimed—

"Granny, Mr. Alfred Brown has made me an offer of marriage."

"An old fool!" said her grandmother. "Why, he's fifty, if he's a day."

"He's only forty-five, for he says so," Etta answered; "and he's very rich, and I shall marry him."

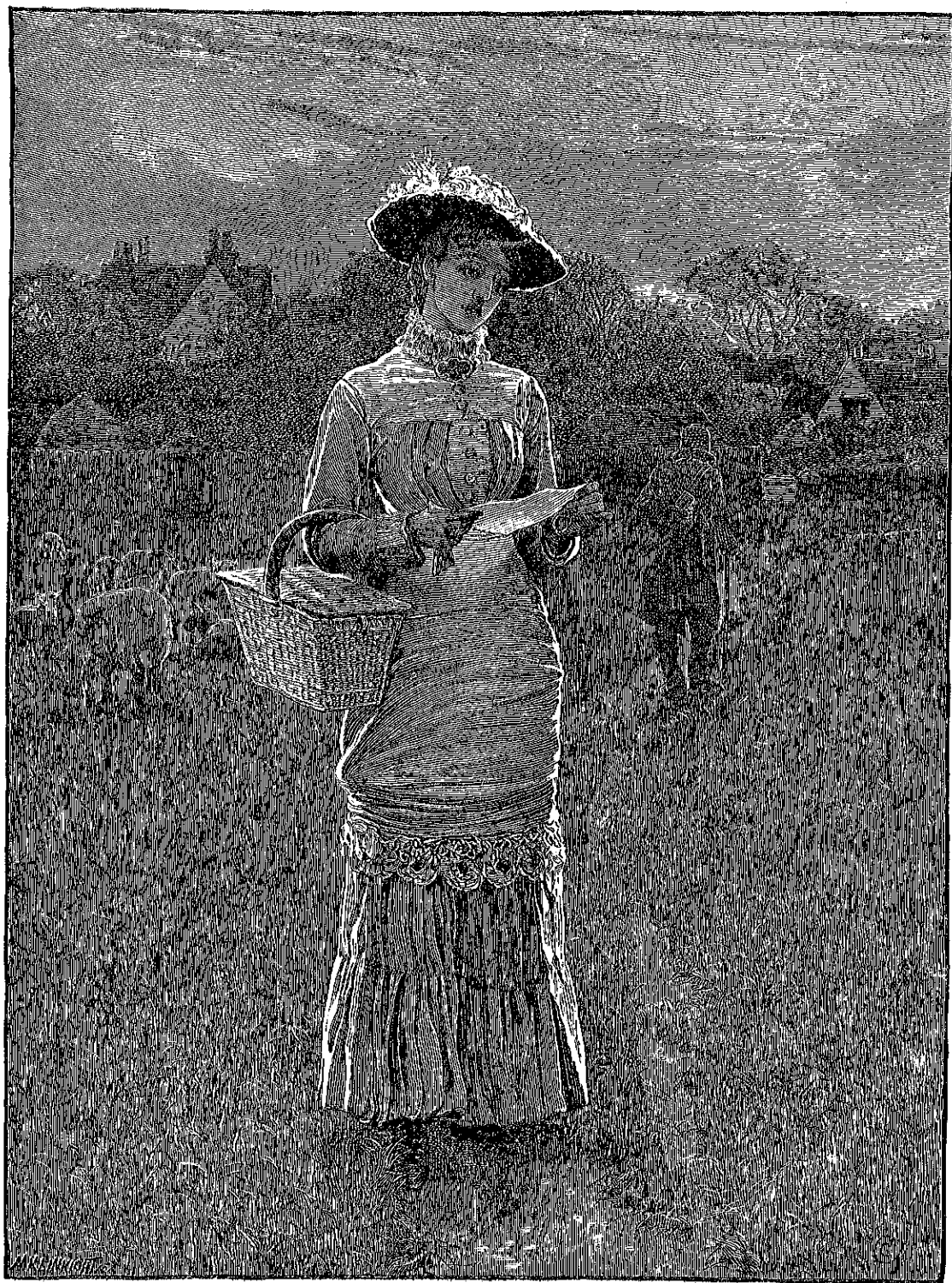
"And you are nineteen and ought to know better," her grandmother said, though perhaps that was the reason why she didn't.

Then Etta went down and told Mary, and Mary said she was a heartless girl and wouldn't prosper; and the maiden aunt said that Mr. Brown would soon tire of a chit like her, and ought to have married a woman of a sensible age.

And Mary said, "What are you going to do about Will?"

And Etta answered, "Jilt him," and did it with no more ado.

And Etta married Mr. Alfred Brown, and they had a very grand wedding, at which a great many speeches



"SHE MET THE POSTMAN, AND HE HANDED HER A LETTER."

were made—all very dull. And then they went off to a dreary country-place for their honeymoon, and they didn't know how to pass the time away, and Etta told Mr. Brown that she felt very dull, and he wouldn't let her have any novels to read, because he said they were all trash, and Etta never could read anything else. So they went for long walks in the damp woods, and Etta caught a very bad cold in her head, and looked quite ugly. And at the end of a month they came back to town, and lived in a very big house, all done up with dadoes, and faded-looking wall-papers, and sickly-hued hangings, and full of clocks that wouldn't go, and chairs you couldn't sit upon, and tables with legs that would have been a disgrace to a spider, and all the other things that the heart of woman, in the present day, delights in. And Etta walked about in her grand dresses, and looked at all her grand rooms; but there was no one to look at her except her husband, and he soon got very grumpy. And Mr. Brown would never let her go to any parties, and never let her invite any friends to the house; and in six months' time she wished she was back with her grandmother and her maiden aunt. And though she had a grand carriage, it was a stuffy, close one, and no one could see her; moreover, the coachman used to insist upon driving in the direction of Camden Town, or the Harrow Road; and her husband said he was an invaluable servant, and the best air was to be had in those localities.

And, meanwhile, Will nearly broke his heart, and then went off to New Zealand, or somewhere else, and there he invented something or other—but I haven't the least idea what—and in five years' time he was very rich indeed, and was always thinking of Mary, and wondering how it was he hadn't fallen in love with her, for she was much the nicer girl of the two. And just before he came home, he wrote her a very long letter, and asked her to marry him; but he said nothing about the big fortune he'd made, for he thought that Mr. Alfred Brown had been married for money, but he should prefer being married for love.

Now Mary and her grandmother, and her maiden aunt, were all staying at a farm-house in the country, and one day Mary, who was looking prettier than ever, and far younger, was walking across a field with a basket full of physic and some good things which she had been to fetch for her grandmother, when she met the postman, and he handed her a letter. And when Mary opened it there was Will's

offer, and he said he'd loved her for a long time, and he wondered if she would fight the world with him; and then she burst into tears, and said, "Dear Will, he's evidently still poor, and so I must love him with all my might and main, as I always have ever since I can remember." So Will appeared on the scene again, and Mary and he went for a walk in the woods, with the flowers beneath and the birds and the trees above, and so on; she told him that she'd never cared for any one else, and never would, and somehow her head found the way to his shoulder and liked it very much.

"And you don't mind being poor, my sweet, sweet, sweet darling?" he said. And she answered—

"Oh! my dear, dear, dear Will, I shall quite enjoy it."

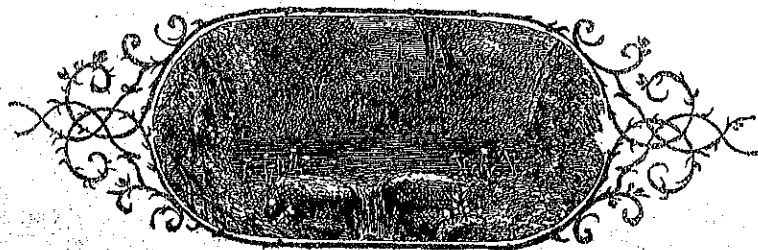
"But I shan't be able to make any settlements on you, as Mr. Brown did on Etta," he said.

"So much the better," Mary answered. "It will save a lawyer's bill, so you see it is real economy to be poor."

And he said, "So it is," and thought what a brilliant girl Mary was.

And then they went back looking very sheepish, and told the grandmother, who said, "well, she never did;" and the maiden aunt, who called Will a weathercock, and said girls were always thinking of love and marriage, and they ought to have something better to do.

And Will and Mary were married, and they had a beautiful honeymoon, and went for nice walks in woods that were quite dry, and laughed so much they didn't know what to do; and, at the end of a month, Will took her home to a beautiful house, furnished with all manner of lovely things—soft cushions, and Indian hangings, and Japanese pots, and exquisite flowers—and he liked her to give parties, and to go to them. And she wore exquisite dresses, and had a beautiful open carriage, and she used to drive about, and all the people who passed her thought how happy and pretty she looked; and sometimes she passed Etta, but she could only see the tip of her nose. And Will and Mary will live together for a great many years, and be very happy indeed; and Etta and Mr. Brown will live together for a great many years, and will have a great many quarrels, and waste a great deal of time in sulking; and the moral of this story is, that if you are engaged to a nice young man and you love him, you'd better cling to him, even if he is as poor as a church mouse; though, of course, if he should become rich it will be very nice indeed.



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